

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-15, and 17 are pending. Claims 2 and 16 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claims 1, 3-6, and 8 are amended by the present amendment. As amended Claims 1, 3-6, and 8 are supported by the original claims, no new matter is added.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Yeager (U.S. Patent No. 6,266,755). However, Claims 2-7 and 15 were objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise were indicated as including allowable subject matter if re-written in independent form. Claim 8-14 and 17 were allowed.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the allowance of Claims 8-14 and 17 and the indication that Claims 2-7 and 15 include allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 is amended to include all the limitations of Claim 2, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Claim 1 (and Claims 3-7 and 15 dependent therefrom) is believed to be allowable. Claim 16 is canceled.

Accordingly, the pending claims are believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

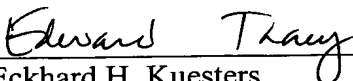
Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 06/04)


Eckhard H. Kuesters
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 28,870

Edward Tracy
Registration No. 47,998